

The Meeting House Times

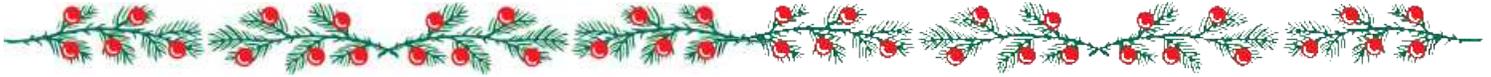
The Congregational Church of Salisbury, United Church of Christ

December 2009



30 Main Street, P.O. Box 392, Salisbury, Connecticut 06068 ~ 860.435.2442 ~ www.salisburycongregational.org

Pamela Wyeth, Editor



In A Class by Themselves

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Q: What do nine students from three schools (Salisbury Central, Indian Mountain, and Lee H. Kellogg) and three grade levels (6, 7, 8) have in common with the Congregational Church of Salisbury?

A: They are the members of a special class which is spending this year learning about other religions, the Bible, the life and teachings of Jesus, the history of the church, different expressions of Christianity, and practices of faith. On Pentecost Sunday in May, those who so choose will be confirmed in our Meeting House. They are Courtney Bliss, Will Bliss, Eric Chin, Colin May, Kate Pastore, Sam Pastore, Rebecca Rashkoff, Rachel Reed, and Christina Rogers. What a wonderful group!



On a weekend in November, five of the confirmands traveled with Deb and Tom Pastore and Lee and me to Deb's family's beautiful home on the shores of Lake Champlain. We arrived on Friday evening, explored the big house, settled in, played games of Capture the Flag, and drank cocoa in front of the fire. Late to bed and late to rise sure suits the adolescent's body clock!



On Saturday, interspersed with a hike to the point, a hunt for Andrew Jackson's portrait (ask a confirmand!), fun on the trampoline, gathering pinecones for a project, helping prepare and eat delicious meals (thanks, Deb), board games and running-around games, Lee, Deb, and I

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-Barbara Collins

Have a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year!



The Profile of Your Next Pastor



We had a great crowd at our last Congregational Dialogue Session (about 40 people were present), which focused on the spiritual strengths, personality traits, and ministry skills and experience of your next pastor. The resulting list of

characteristics from those conversations is below, in order of the number of times mentioned and/or emphasized:

- Charismatic, energetic, optimistic, outgoing, humor
- Warm/pastoral/compassionate/good listener
- Addresses conflict and difficult issues effectively (negotiation/mediation)
- Wide range of real life experiences
- Community involvement and outreach
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Ministry to youth and families
- Sermons that are relevant, engaging and inspiring
- Strong spiritual and theological grounding
- Strong leadership and administration skills
- Values music in life of church
- Challenging, introduces new ideas

The following were also listed, though with significantly (and increasingly) less frequency:

- Pastoral care and visitation
- Experience in church growth
- Responsible and mature
- Reaches out to all age groups and diverse backgrounds
- Adult Bible study: teaching and formation skills
- Strong connection to the UCC and social justice

An exercise was also conducted to help define and determine what *Preferred Pastoral Leadership Style* best suits our congregation. The participants clearly identified a preference for a collaborative style of leadership that leans slightly toward a more democratic approach, rather than unilateral, but still maintains (and is empowered in) its leadership prerogatives and mandates. This would include a decision-making process for critical problems and/or important ideas (ones related to envisioning the future, policy-making, and spiritual

formation for instance) that would actively seek out the input of individuals and groups, as well as invite their participation in the final decision(s).

The relevance this session and its discoveries have to the upcoming search process is extensive. Nearly every section of the church profile, which your search committee will be creating, asks specific questions regarding different aspects of the life of the church. They will then ask you to define clearly your desires and expectations of the new pastor's role with regard to those areas. Last Sunday's session provides your Committee-to-be very clear preferences, needs and expectations to include in those narratives.

Among the next steps will be creating the Search Committee, which the Deacons are working fervently to accomplish. The committee will then sift through and parse all the input from the five Dialogue Sessions we have conducted. Sometime in January, there will be one last survey of the whole congregation on individual theological backgrounds and contexts. The committee's charge will be to take strongly into consideration all of that input when writing your church profile *and* reading through the dozens of candidate profiles they are sure to receive. The work you have done to "*set them up for success*" in this task has been immeasurably valuable.

During 2010, we will most likely be scheduling a few conversations and/or workshops on topics such as "*Healthy Pastor-Congregation Relationships*," "*Strategies for Moving into the Future*," and possibly one on gaining a greater understanding of our connection with the United Church of Christ and why we invest in that covenantal relationship. These will not have the same sense of critical mass participation as the five Discovery Sessions did, but will rather be offered for those interested in the information and dialogue.

As always, you have given me more and more reasons to be proud to be your interim pastor during this transition time in your life as a church. God has brought us through much so far...and will continue to do so as we celebrate the upcoming holidays and move into the next year. I look forward with anticipation to that growth together.

Pastor Steve

Email: rev.steve@salisburycongregational.org
Blog: <http://salisburycongregational.wordpress.com>



The Deacons of the church are in the midst of receiving nominations from various committees for the formation of search committee for a settled pastor. The November issue of *The Meeting House Times* included a guideline of recommendations for any person nominated to serve in this capacity. This remains on our church website, as well. Notify anyone on the Church Council or the Deacons if you would like to serve. Remember, if you are recommending someone to serve on this committee, he or she should be spoken to *before* a name is submitted, to see if the nominee is able to commit to the responsibilities.

At our Annual fall meeting on Sunday, November 1st, the congregation voted to amend the bylaws for the Deacons that will now allow a group of 12 persons to serve, regardless of the ratio of men and women.

At the same meeting, the vote on gender neutral marriage passed by margin of 80% in favor to 20% opposed. We are grateful for everyone who participated in our October question and answer dialogue regarding this issue. Attendance was strong and many thoughtful points of views were expressed.

As we enter Advent, we invite everyone to reflect on their personal journeys and that of this church during the past year. We have been a vibrant congregation, both in worship and fellowship. It is our hope that everyone realizes their significance in what is truly a blessed church.

- Janet Kaufman for the Board of Deacons

The Christmas Concert

Make a Joyful Noise!

The annual Christmas Concert will be held on Sunday, December 13th, at 2:30, and will feature music by English composers. The choir will sing four carols by John Rutter and "Rejoice in the Lamb," a cantata by Benjamin Britten.

The Bell Choir will perform several carol arrangements on English tunes, and the congregation will sing hymn-carols by English composers.

Plan to attend and bring your friends and neighbors!

"I will sing to the LORD, I will sing; I will make music to the LORD..."



An Opportunity for Christmas Giving

Add someone to your Christmas list this year who doesn't "already have everything." In late November the Christmas Giving Tree was set up in the Parish Hall. The ornaments on the tree list gifts for families in need.

On **Sunday, December 6th and December 13th**, members of the congregation who wish to participate should choose an ornament and purchase the gift



indicated. **The wrapped gift, with the ornament attached, should be placed under the Giving Tree on or before Sunday, December 20th.**

Our gifts will be given to families in Amenia and Millerton and to mothers and their children living in a shelter for abused women. Your past generosity to people in these stressful situations has been overwhelming and greatly appreciated.

Fall Festival 2009 Wrap-up

The 2009 Fall Festival has come and gone, though we're still catching up with some details. It was a very successful effort, and the Committee thanks all who were a part of it. According to our hard-working Fall Festival Treasurer John Estabrook, the initial (gross) proceeds total for our church is \$17,530.56. This compares to \$16,206.32 for last year's gross. Modest growth is good!

A few expenses are still outstanding, but we believe all have been accounted for. If there are any remaining expenses that we don't know about, please get them to John without delay.

One more thought: in 2008 donations to help defray the costs of the Fall Festival totaled \$1,410; this year the total is \$100. We don't know why the huge drop in donations occurred, but it's not too late to help us out by sending a check, particularly if you weren't able to be there to help in person. Please make it out to the Salisbury Congregational Church, with the notation of Fall Festival. We're still at PO Box 392, Salisbury, CT 06068.

- Lee Collins for the Fall Festival Committee



DAVID A. OLSEN
NOVEMBER 29, 1937 ~ NOVEMBER 14, 2009

It is with mixed emotions that I offer these remembrances. While I am so sad that I have lost two dear friends, Herbert Gustafson and David Olsen, I take comfort in knowing that they have both been relieved of a terrible quality of life. Herb was no longer Herb and was not able to enjoy his family and friends whom he loved so deeply. David fought a courageous battle against an aggressive cancer that dissipated his body; caused him great pain; and tortured his wife and children. Neither of my dear friends was going to get any better and I have the joy of knowing that they are comfortable, and at peace, wrapped in the loving arms of our Lord.

It is my understanding that Gordon and Dede Gustafson are contributing some thoughts about Herb to this newsletter so I will confine my remarks to David.

Several years ago, driving home from a dinner party, I remarked that I had just met one of the most amazing men I had ever met in my entire life. It was David Olsen and I knew we were going to become great friends. And we did. I would like to think that it was his sense of humor and his wit that instantly impressed me but I know it was much more than that. There was a disarming charm about him. He was ever polite, ever gracious.

When he would visit our home and comment on our vegetable gardens we would listen in awe as he would explain to us that he had decided against growing the usual vegetables like tomatoes and lettuce in his Selleck Hill garden in favor of the more unique and rewarding papaya, mango, and pineapple.

This was done in such a manner that one would wonder how he accomplished those horticultural feats in the Northwest Corner of Connecticut. He and Bobbie would be long gone before Barbara would turn to me and say “you know, I’ve been thinking, and I’m not so sure I believe David about the Pineapples.”

David was the best neighbor a community could ever hope to have. He cared about this town and the people who lived in it. When we needed a new ambulance he made it happen. Affordable housing was of great concern to him. He did not want Salisbury to turn into the Hamptons. He championed diversity and wanted young families in our town. I had the pleasure of serving on the Board of the Salisbury Visiting Nurses and the Board of Trustees of the church with him. I witnessed, appreciated, and benefited from his insightful mind, probing questions, and fair conclusions. In his inside jacket pocket was a folded piece of paper. When he heard something that needed attention it went on the piece of paper and ultimately got done. When someone had a great idea, it went on the piece of paper and was utilized. When he heard a good joke, it went on the piece of paper and got retold.

David was a highly successful and honest business man who was revered by his peers. But that accomplishment paled by comparison to his qualities as a husband, father, and friend. David was a loving and devoted husband and father and he was the best friend you could ever hope to have. We are going to miss him. It's Ok to be sad. It's OK to cry.

Contributed by Rod Lankler

A memorial service will be held in our Meeting House celebrating David’s life on Monday, December 14th at 11:00, with a reception following at the Sharon Country Club.

Annual Stewardship Campaign



It is that time of year again. Thanksgiving is behind us and the Christmas season is upon us with all its many splendors. We are reminded that this is the season of gifts and giving, of joys and merriment, and of a child born in a manger who came to give us so much.

The Every Member Canvass recently went out asking you to give to our goal of raising \$180,000. A daunting amount, especially now in these delicate times. I wish that there was some Christmas magic that would drop this large sum down our parish hall chimney. We could scoop it up and deposit it in the bank and be done with this task for another year.

I do believe in the magic and the miracle of Christmas, but I believe that the magic comes from within all of us. We are the ones who make magic happen because we believe in the mystery and the miracle of Christ. Which is why I believe that even in these challenging economic times we will make our goal of \$180, 000 because you will all rise to this important occasion and give as much as you can.

Thank you for all that each of you do to make our church the blessed place that it is.

- Carol Magowan

Church Family Night Out

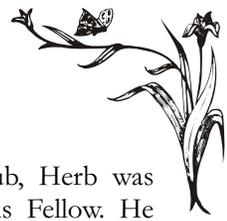
Potluck Supper and Christmas Crafts
Friday, December 4th - 5:30



The Board of Religious Education will host our annual church family potluck supper to begin the season of Advent. Bring a large main dish or salad (either homemade or takeout) to share. Bread, dessert and beverage will be provided. After supper we will make some Christmas crafts. All materials will be provided.

We will conclude our evening by 7:30 with a brief Advent candle-lighting service. Anyone and everyone is invited to join us for this time of fellowship and fun. Have a question? Need a ride? Call Barbara Collins (435-0051) or email barb@leecollins.com.

The Prayer Group Workshop, scheduled for Sunday, December 6th, has been canceled. It will be rescheduled sometime in the spring.



HERBERT ARDOLD GUSTAFSON
NOVEMBER 23, 1918 ~ NOVEMBER 7, 2009

Born in Richmond Hill, NY, the son of Signe and Martin Gustafson, Herb graduated from Richmond Hill High School, the University of Wisconsin, and Harvard Business School, and obtained his Master's degree in Finance and Marketing from New York University.

After serving for six years in WW II in the Army Air Corps in England and Germany and retiring with the rank of Major, Herb met a local girl from Lime Rock named Alice Lukes in July 1947. She knew him, at first, as Captain Gus. After dating for about a year, they married on June 12, 1948, at Trinity Episcopal Church in Lime Rock.

Herb and Alice lived for nearly 30 years in Scarsdale, NY, interrupted only by a 2-year assignment in Johannesburg, South Africa, before retiring in 1979. It was then that Herb and Alice moved full-time to Lakeville and built a house on Belgo Rd.

In addition to his commitment to the Salisbury Congregational Church as a Deacon and Trustee, Music Mountain was one of Herb's passions. Being its Treasurer for many years was just one side of his musical interest. Herb loved to sing! He joined the HousaTonics in his late 70s, lending his strong "LEAD" voice to help round out the chorus until 6-way bypass surgery sidetracked him several years ago. Even in his waning days, Herb's love of music was still evident. His daughter-in-law, Christine Gevert, visited him in the hospital and played several pieces that he had practiced, as a former piano student. With not much effort he was able to play a recognizable melody back. An amazing feat!

As a member of the Salisbury Rotary Club, Herb was awarded its highest honor as a Paul Harris Fellow. He volunteered for more than a few stints at Lime Rock Park working the various functions that supported Rotary International. Herb also loved his volunteer work with the Sharon Hospital Life Line program, and installed a number of the sets at homes around the area.

Herb and Alice loved to travel. Their wanderings have taken them all over the world, including trips to China, Russia, around the Horn of South America, India and all through Europe. They also enjoyed their many winters visiting friends in London. As his son, Gordon, attests, he never saw anyone who could pack a suitcase like his father. He was such an organized packer that if one wasn't careful, "an innocuous looking suitcase could give you a hernia!"

Recollections from Gordon's eulogy of his father:

"Dad was opinionated, definitely, but amazingly enough, as I grew older, I realized that those opinions had been arrived at through careful thought and years of experience.

He was filled with immeasurable loyalty, deep moral fiber and steadfast beliefs with an undying love for his family."

In addition to his wife of more than 61 years, Herb is survived by a son, Gordon, and his wife Christine Gevert; by a daughter, Elizabeth (DeeDee) Dohan, and her husband, Andy; and by four grandchildren, Kimberly, Richard, Elizabeth and David."

Saturday, December 19th Deadline for submissions for the January newsletter



The earth is the LORD's, & everything in it, the world, & all who live in it.
Psalm 24:1

GLOBAL CRAFTS

The opportunity to purchase wonderful Global Crafts, with additions from SERRV, will be open to the whole community on **Saturday, December 5th from 10:00 to 4:00** during Salisbury's Hometown Holidays.

(SERRV is a nonprofit organization with a mission to eradicate poverty wherever it resides by providing opportunity and support to artisans and farmers worldwide.)

We will expand from our small room to the Parish Hall where you may find things you missed before. **We will also be selling after church on Sunday, December 6th - our last day for the season.**

Please encourage your friends and neighbors to take advantage of the opportunity to purchase crafts from third world crafters.

Christmas Caroling Bus Tour



Sunday, December 20th - 5:00

We will board a bus to take the message of God's love at Christmas to our members and friends who are not able to get out of their homes for holiday activities. Singers and non-singers of all ages and abilities are invited to take part.

We will return to the parish hall at about 7:00 for our traditional giant sub sandwich.

This is a great chance to be together with friends while bringing the joy of Christmas to the hearts of others. Students home for the holidays are especially welcome for a time of reunion.



December

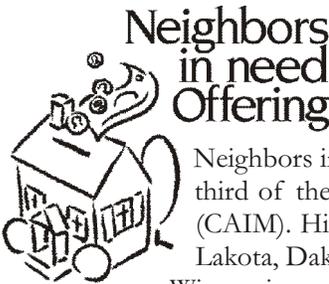


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
10:00 - Worship & Communion 11:15 - Trustees 5:00 - Tree Lighting Service on the Green 7:00 - Lessons & Carols, Hotchkiss <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i>	7	8	9	10	5:30 - Advent Potluck Supper	12
10:00 - Worship & Church School 2:30 - Choir Concert 4:30 - Lessons & Carols, Salisbury Sch. 5:00 - 7:30 - Youth Group & Supper <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i>	11	14	15	16	17	18
11:00 - David Olsen Memorial Service Reception following at Sharon Country Club	19	20	21	22	23	24
10:00 - Worship & Church School 11:30 - Christmas Pageant 5:00 - Christmas Caroling <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>	25	26	27	28	29	30
11:00 - David Olsen Memorial Service Reception following at Sharon Country Club	31	1	2	3	4	5
10:00 - Worship Service No Church School. Crib/toddler care will be available	6	7	8	9	10	11



It Was A Great Year!

Neighbors in Need helps make another world possible.



The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on **Thursday, December 24th** supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches worked with the Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, and Hockak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska.

Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM, which is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.A.

Please give generously to support this important work.

Lessons & Carols

At 7:30 on Thursday evening, December 24th, we will gather for our traditional Service of Lessons and Carols. The Christmas gospel and prophecies relating to the birth of the Messiah will be read by members of our church family. Between readings we will sing carols and listen to musical offerings from our wonderful Senior Choir. The service ends with candlelight and joyful hugs. Plan to arrive early to hear the Bell Choir prelude.

During the service **children are invited to bring wrapped new toys forward during the offertory for the benefit of local children served by Salisbury Family Services.**



LESSONS & CAROLS



December

- 4th Robert Haiko
- 12th Hunter Kinzinger
- 14th Sharon O'Connor
- 15th Alice Gustafson
- 16th Armen Babigian
- 17th Bob Palmer
- 19th Brad Haiko
- 25th Gavin Reed
- 28th Donald Reed
- 29th Tom Light
- 30th Sal Accardo

read the Gospel of Mark out loud to the kids. Sam noticed that “a house divided against itself cannot stand” comes from the Bible.

We talked about worship, traditions, and rituals, especially in regard to the Catholic church. Then, with a mental list of what to watch and listen for, we attended afternoon mass at the local Catholic church. Courtney thought “it was interesting to see the Catholic service because . . . I'd never been to a Catholic service before.”

Saturday ended with a wonderful dinner and an evening of singing around the piano, playing games, and planning our own worship for the next day. Sunday morning found us at the beautiful outdoor chapel of nearby Camp Dudley where we expressed our faith through scripture, songs, and prayers written by the kids. (Christina was interested to learn about different kinds of prayers: praising, thanking, asking, and silent. The asking prayer she shared with us was very moving.) Then, after just one more cup of cocoa, it was time to head home.

Thank you, Deb and Tom for your generous hospitality; thank you Lee for your ever-present encouragement; thank you supportive parents; and most of all, thank you, confirmands, for your enthusiasm, your energy, and your willingness to challenge, to think, to learn.

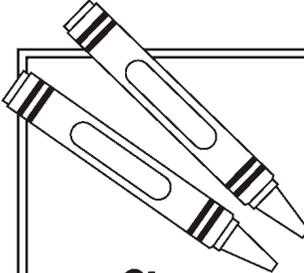
- Barbara Collins



Sunday, December 20th - 11:15

During Church School the children will be costumed as shepherds, angels, kings, and animals, and the annual **Christmas Pageant** will take place in the parish hall after morning worship. This informal but endearing retelling of the Christmas story takes about fifteen minutes and may be the most-photographed event of the church year! Extra hands to help costume the cast and help backstage are always welcome.

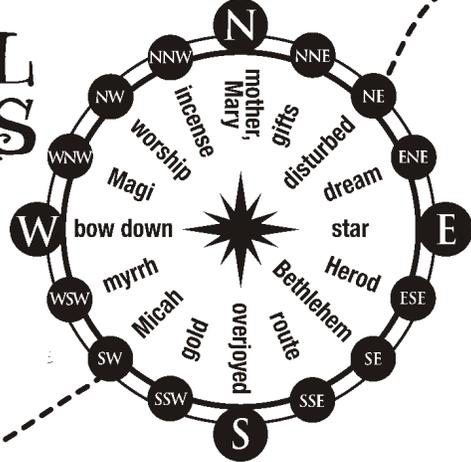
There will be no classes or activities for children on Sunday, December 27th and January 3rd, but crib/toddler care will be available for the littlest ones. Church school classes will resume on January 4th.



Just for **KIDS**

SPECIAL VISITORS

Matthew 2 tells of visitors who traveled to worship Jesus. Read that story, or see if you can answer the questions below from memory. Use the compass guide to fill in the correct answers.



1. Who was king during the time of Jesus' birth? _____ (ESE)
2. Who came from the East to worship the one born king of the Jews? _____ (WNW)
3. How was King Herod feeling about Jesus' birth? _____ (NE)
4. Which prophet did the chief priests and teachers of the law quote when King Herod asked where the Christ would be born? _____ (SW)
5. In what city would Christ be born? _____ (SE)
6. King Herod lied to the wise men and told them to search and report back so he, too, could do what to Christ? _____ (NW)
7. What did the Magi see in the east and follow to find Jesus? _____ (E)
8. When the star stopped, how did the Magi feel? _____ (S)
9. Who else did the Magi see with Jesus? His _____ (N)
10. What did the Magi do first before they worshiped the child? _____ (W)
11. Name the three treasures the Magi brought for Jesus. _____ (SSW)
 _____ (NNW) _____ (WSW)
12. These three treasures were all brought for Jesus as ... _____ (NNE)
13. What warned the Magi not to return to Herod? A _____ (ENE)
14. The Magi had to return to their country by another _____ (SSE)

Answers: 1. Herod, 2. Magi, 3. disturbed, 4. Micah, 5. Bethlehem, 6. worship, 7. star, 8. overjoyed, 9. mother, Mary, 10. bow down, 11. gold, incense, myrrh, 12. gifts, 13. dream, 14. route

